

## Illustrations and Quotations of “Railroad Literature on Suitable Places”

Philippe Forêt. “Railroad literature on suitable places. How the Japanese Government Railways forged an «Old China» travel culture.” In Monika Burri, Kilian T. Elsasser, David Gugerli, eds. *Die Internationalität der Eisenbahn, 1850-1970*. Zurich: Chronos Verlag, 2003.

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## SUMMARY

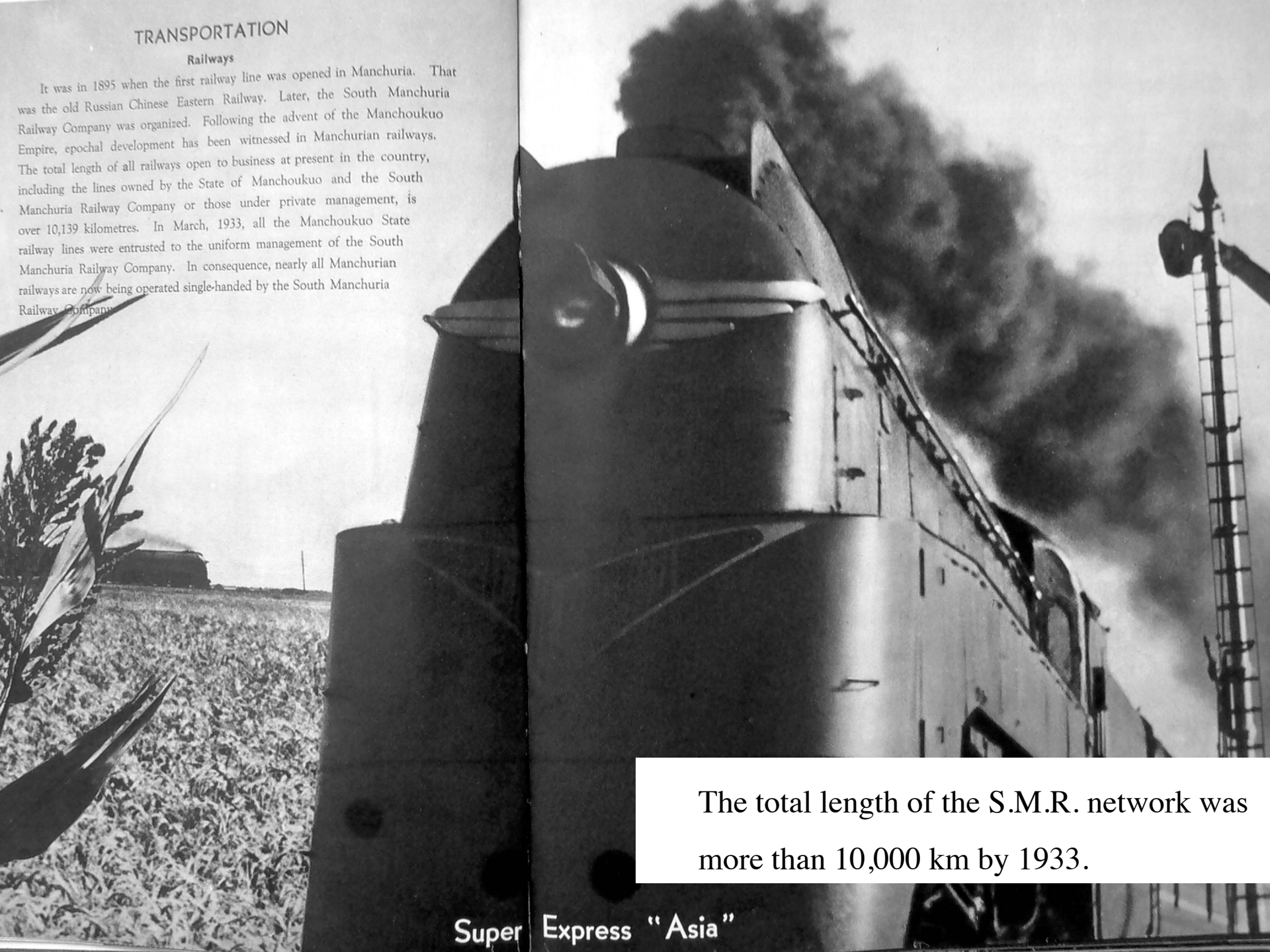
My paper examines the periodicals and guidebooks on China that the South Manchuria Railways Company (S.M.R. or Mantetsu) issued between 1907 and 1940. These promotional materials help us understand how exactly a transportation company organized the ways in which an Asian country should be seen by European and American visitors.

Quotations and illustrations from S.M.R. materials are following.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Railways

It was in 1895 when the first railway line was opened in Manchuria. That was the old Russian Chinese Eastern Railway. Later, the South Manchuria Railway Company was organized. Following the advent of the Manchoukuo Empire, epochal development has been witnessed in Manchurian railways. The total length of all railways open to business at present in the country, including the lines owned by the State of Manchoukuo and the South Manchuria Railway Company or those under private management, is over 10,139 kilometres. In March, 1933, all the Manchoukuo State railway lines were entrusted to the uniform management of the South Manchuria Railway Company. In consequence, nearly all Manchurian railways are now being operated single-handed by the South Manchuria Railway Company.



The total length of the S.M.R. network was more than 10,000 km by 1933.

Super Express "Asia"

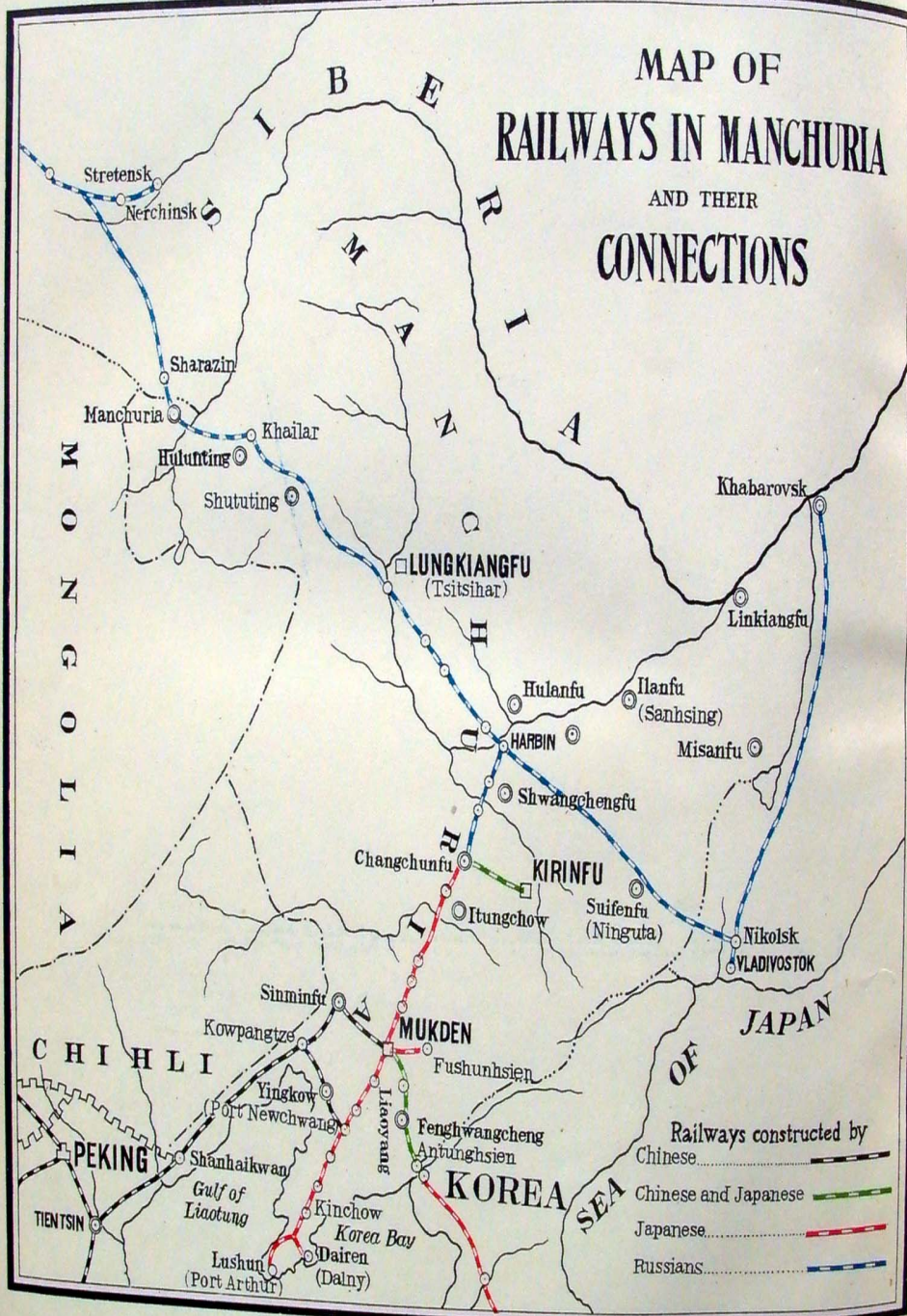


SOUTH MANCHURIA RAILWAY

The difficulties which the S.M.R. had to face in the construction of railway lines in the outlying regions of the country are beyond description, but the work proceeded steadily upon the remains of scores of sacrificed lives.



# MAP OF RAILWAYS IN MANCHURIA AND THEIR CONNECTIONS



Manchoukuo possesses advanced transportation organs and excellent hotels which can well be compared with those in Japan proper and at the same time offers an alluring color of ancient Chinese life.



# FENG - TIEN (MUKDEN)

Scale 1:20000

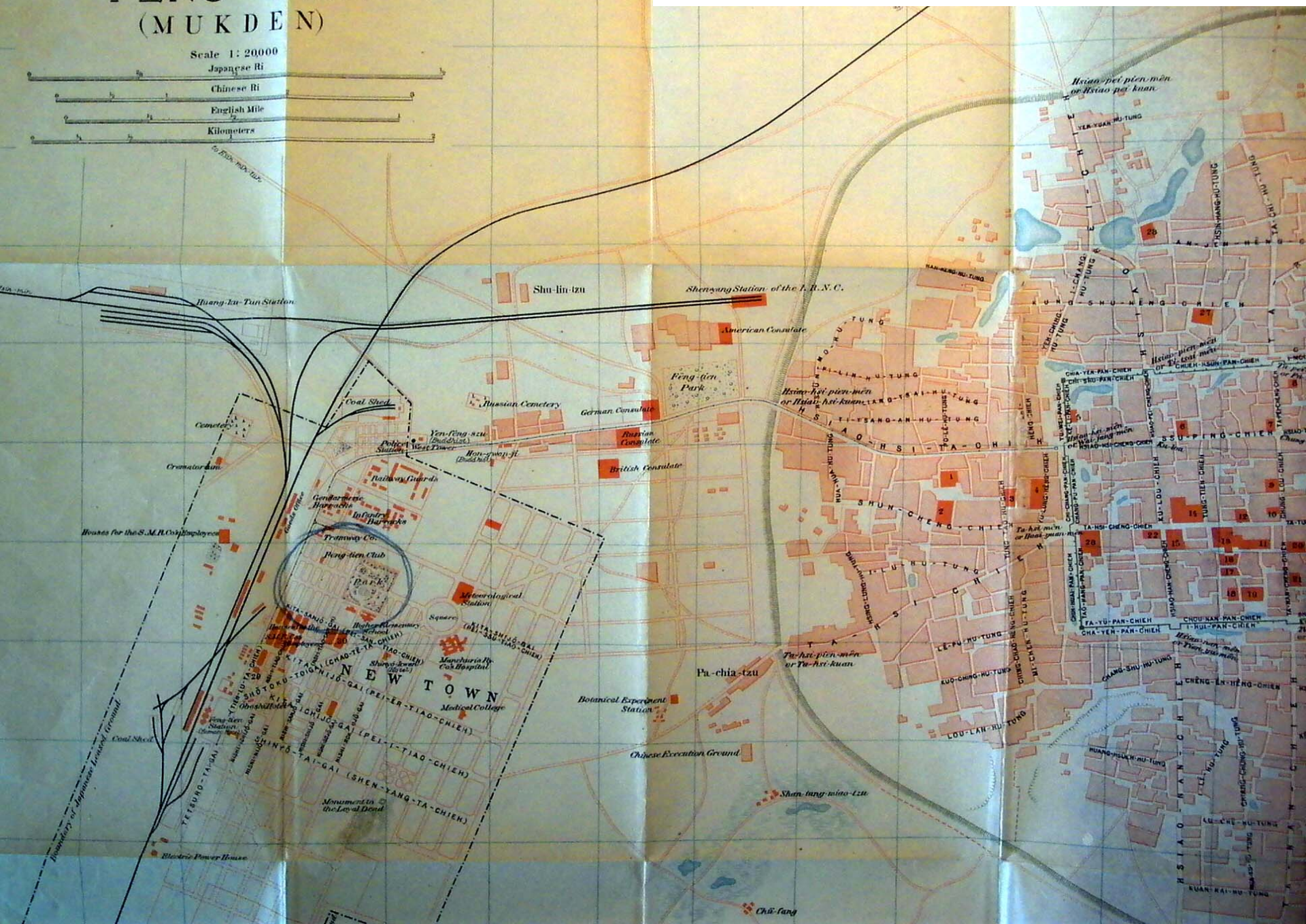
Japanese Ri

Chinese Ri

English Mile

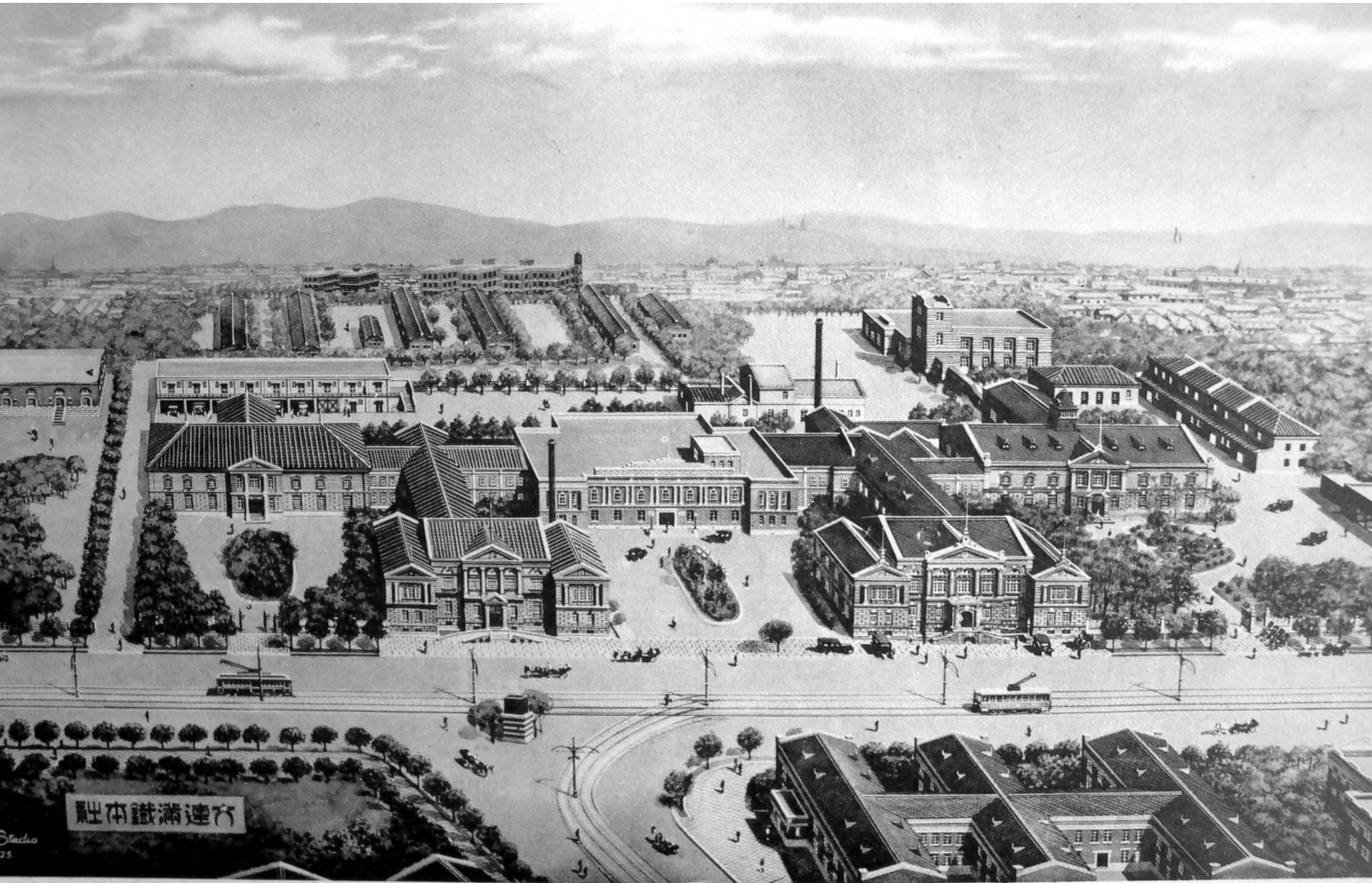
Kilometers

## Mukden & S.M.R. New Town





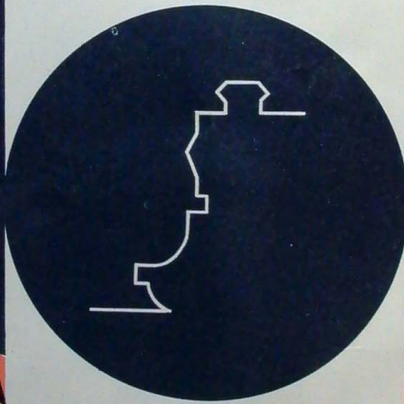
## The S.M.R. Head Offices



A Bird's-eye View of the Head Offices of the South Manchuria Railway Company, Dairen.



# SOUTH MANCHURIA RAILWAY COMPANY



CARRYING  
THE LIGHT OF  
CIVILIZATION  
INTO MANCHURIA

Today, Manchuria is covered with a network of railways exceeding ten thousand kilometres in all, and the light of civilisation began to penetrate the remotest corners of the country.



Victor S. Clark

F340

345

# GUIDE

## TO MANCHOUKUO



The inquiring traveler will find much valuable information in the series of handsomely illustrated booklets with maps, issued free (in English) by the Publicity Department of the Railway.

SOUTH MANCHURIA RAILWAY CO.

# YAMATO HOTELS

## S.M.R. HOTEL CHAIN SERVICE

YAMATO HOTEL  
DAIREN

YAMATO HOTEL  
HOSHIGAURA

YAMATO HOTEL  
RYOJUN

YAMATO HOTEL  
MUKDEN

YAMATO HOTEL  
HSINKING

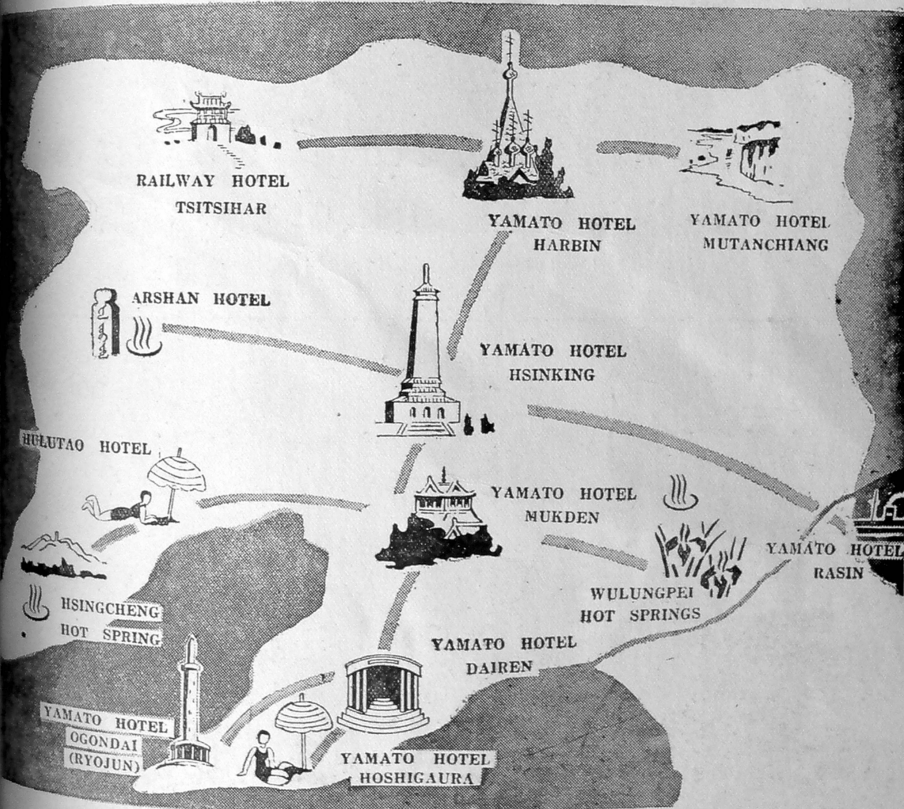
YAMATO HOTEL  
HARBIN



English is spoken in all of the Yamato Hotels. Certain of them are strikingly palatial in character, and in size and appointments they remind the traveler of the best American hotels.

HOTEL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT,  
GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF RAILWAYS.

WHEN YOU TRAVEL IN  
MANCHOUKUO  
YOU'LL ENJOY THE COMFORTS OF  
**YAMATO HOTELS**  
SMR. HOTEL CHAIN SERVICE



HOTEL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT  
GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF RAILWAYS

The South Manchuria Railway Company  
has erected, and maintains at heavy  
expense, a chain of excellent, thoroughly  
modern hotels managed on American lines,  
for the benefit of visiting tourists.





The Tangkangtzu Hotel was indirectly managed by the S.M.R., its structure immense in scale and its proprietors scrupulously attentive to conveniences within. We also appreciated that the maids all preserved the humility of respectable young women and had nothing of the air of waitresses about them.

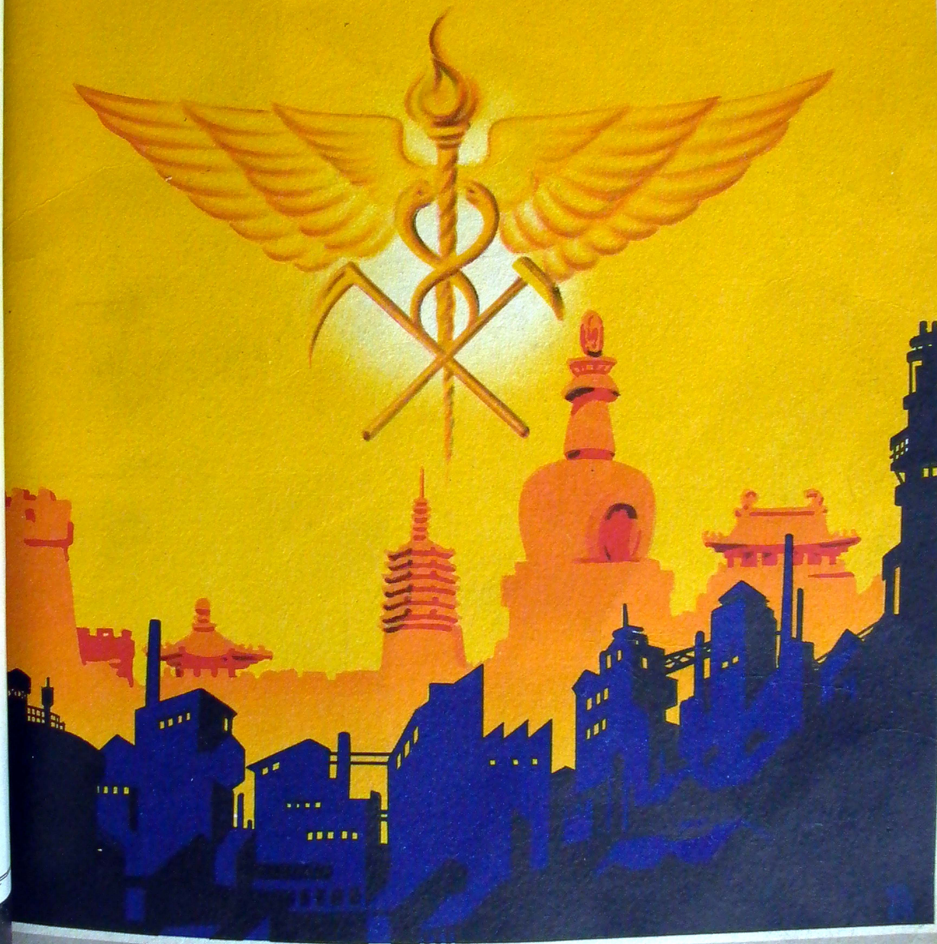


SPECIAL  
**MANCHOUKUO ECONOMIC**

NUMBER

NOV 30 1938

Supplementary Edition of Manchuria



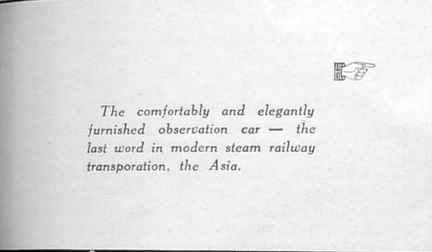
PUBLISHED BY  
MANCHURIA DAILY NEWS

May 25, 1938

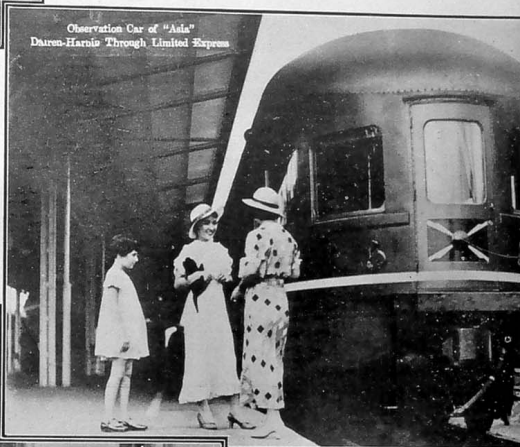
Mukden is a veritable bit of 'Old China' for within the city is still another wall girdling the ancient (erected in 1642) Manchu *Chinlan Palaces*, from the topmost point of which one gets a commanding view of the city and surrounding country.



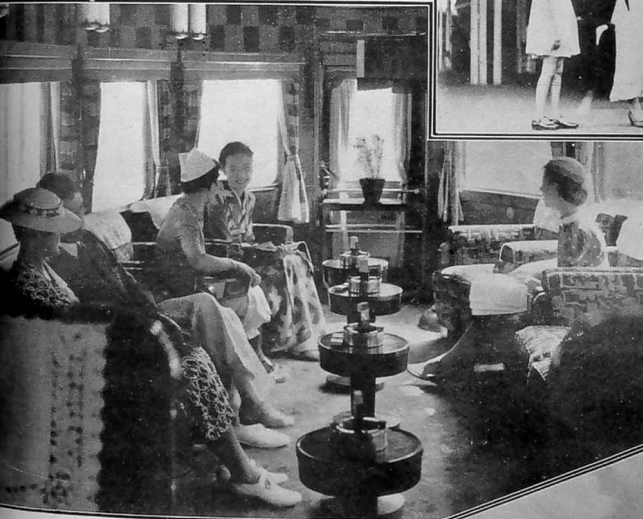
The pride of the South Manchuria Railway Company, the streamlined super-express Asia steaming its way across the plains of Manchuria.



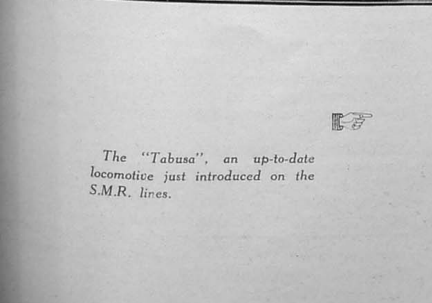
The comfortably and elegantly furnished observation car — the last word in modern steam railway transportation, the Asia.



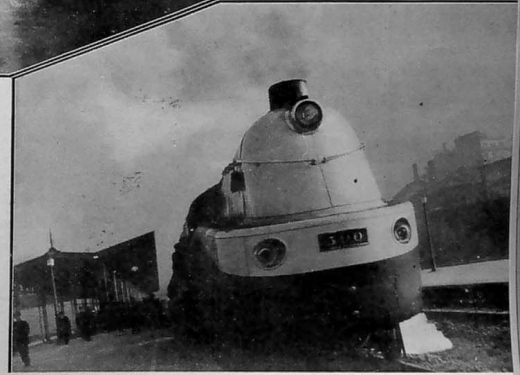
Observation Car of "Asia"  
Dairen-Harbin Through Limited Express



The observation car of the fastest express in the Orient, the Asia, which runs between Dairen and Harbin.



The "Tabusa", an up-to-date locomotive just introduced on the S.M.R. lines.



With the closing years of the last (19th) century, a new era of railway building slowly dawned over the country and a miraculous transformation was wrought within a short span of less than five decades.



# MANCHOUKUO

HERE IS GRANDEUR  
OF THE OLD WORLD  
AND  
MAJESTY OF THE NEW  
IT IS YOURS TO ENJOY

THE SOUTH MANCHURIA RAILWAY CO.  
GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF RAILWAYS

Just as the civilization of Egypt depends on the bountiful Nile, so the progress of Manchoukuo is inseparably linked with the communication vertebra that is the S.M.R.

## CONCLUSION

Japanese train travel literature subsumed an original context under a new layer of cultural veneer. The S.M.R.'s 'Old China' was a landscape that had no historical meaning. The temples, mountains, hot springs, pagodas, city walls, mausoleums of Manchuria were all independent commodity items that could be collected but not interacted with. Nothing brought together the landmarks of Northeastern China except the convenient S.M.R. connections.